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Fragmentation, sprawl, and rapid changes in ownership are leading to a crisis of sustainability in forests and rural communities in Maine and the nation. Lloyd Irland provides a brief history of U.S. forest ownership patterns and global trends. He suggests that Mainers need to come up with a new mix of private institutions to sustain and manage large tracts of forest for the long term.

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PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT IN HEALTH PLANNING

In this two-part series, Ronald E. Beard, Tish Tanski and Wendy Wolf discuss how nearly 400 Maine citizens were brought together in a “virtual town meeting” to provide input in the development of Maine’s biennial state health plan. The plan guides how the state makes decisions about using its health care resources. The “tough choices” town meeting discussed in this article serves as a model for how citizens can directly participate in shaping key policies of the day.

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The 2005 BRAC Process: The Case to Save Maine’s Bases

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Maine Gov. James B. Longley Don Quixote and Sir Thomas More, with a Dash of Machiavelli—An Appropriate Political DNA for the Day?

Jim McGregor, Governor James B. Longley’s executive assistant during his 1975-1979 term of office, reflects on Longley the man and the era in which he won election against all political odds to become Maine’s first independent governor. He sheds new and hitherto private light on the multifaceted Governor Longley, and suggests he may have been a man ideal for the time in which he served.

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Creating Flexibility in Teacher-Certification Policy to Ensure Quality and Equity

While Maine and many states have requirements and standards aimed at having “well-qualified” teachers, rigidity in those requirements can sometimes prevent well-qualified—but culturally and linguistically diverse—teachers from becoming certified. Flynn Ross in this article chronicles the successful efforts by one group to petition the Maine Board of Education to allow greater flexibility in testing standards.

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Loan Forgiveness and Repayment: Can They Increase Education Attainment in Maine?

Financial barriers are sometimes cited as an important factor behind Maine’s persistently low level of higher education attainment. In this article, Maine’s state economist, Catherine Reilly, examines the pros and cons of two, perhaps underutilized, tools for increasing Maine’s higher education attainment—loan forgiveness and loan repayment.

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